

NARRATIVE OF THE U. S. NAVAL STATION, TONGUE POINT, ASTORIA, OREGON,
1 SEPTEMBER 1945 to 1 OCTOBER 1946

At the close of World War Two the U. S. Naval Station, Port Docks was under a Basic Box Base Loads Program. This was quickly drawn to a close and on September 19, 1945, Port Docks was established as a temporary berthing area for the 19th Fleet. At the same time, the Tongue Point Naval Station was established as the permanent berthing area when it was changed from the Bureau of Aeronautics to the Bureau of Ships 1/ and was redesignated as the U. S. Naval Station, Tongue Point, Oregon. 2/

On 1 September 1945 the United States Naval Station, Astoria was under the command of Captain A. R. Ponto, but on 6 October 1945 Captain Ligon B. Ard was made Commanding Officer of Port Docks and on 1 January 1946 also took over command of Tongue Point. About the same time Captain Samuel P. Jenkins was made Commander Columbia River Group, berthed in Astoria and Portland.

On April 24, 1946, the area starting at the extreme north end of Tongue Point, proceeding due east approximately four thousand five hundred feet, thence due south, approximately eleven thousand feet to the north tip of John Day Point, thence following

1/ (OP 515-R-RFS, Ser: 191P515-9 November 1945)

2/ SecNav ltr, op24, er 134 P24 of 29 November 1945

Enclosure (A)

the Seattle, Portland, and Spokane Railroad and the shore-line of Cathlamet Bay back to the point of beginning, was dedicated as Mott Basin after the late Representative James R. Mott of Oregon. 3/ This area was to be used to build eight finger piers which would come to the cost of approximately five million dollars. The ships were decommissioned at Port Docks and Portland, and will be permanently docked here. The ships designated for this spot are as follows:

- 4 mine laying ships
- 24 landing craft (infantry, large)
- 24 landing craft, support
- 124 landing craft (tank)
- 39 landing ships (medium)
- 9 landing ships, medium (rocket)
- 24 landing ships, tank
- 8 landing craft (flotilla, flagship)
- 26 submarine chasers
- 49 mine sweepers
- 18 motor mine sweepers
- 4 repair ships (battle damage)
- 4 repair ships (internal combustion engine)
- 10 repair ships (internal combustion engine)
- 10 repair ships, landing craft

3/ OP 24 B PD Ser: 243 P24 dated 18 December 1945

Enclosure (A)
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1 aircraft repair ship
2 floating work shops
49 covered lighters
15 seaplane wrecking derricks
7 ocean tugs
36 large harbor tugs
9 small harbor tugs
8 barracks ships

On 28 May 1946, the berthing facility at Portland, Oregon was established as a subordinate command under the U. S. Naval Station, Tongue Point, Oregon. 4/

The deactivating of these ships consisted first of securing the ships to the berths and making them airtight to prevent corrosion and decomposition of materials. The ships were then de-humidified with a form of inexpensive air conditioning developed in the Navy. All stores except provisions, ammunition and fuel are kept on board. The ships are staffed with a skeleton crew in a caretaker status and maintained in such a condition that they could be fully manned in ten days and ready for action after a twenty-day shakedown cruise. 5/ At the present date, four hundred and twenty nine of the ships have been or are in the process of being decommissioned. All work is expected to be finished by October 1947. When finished, the Port Docks piers will be returned to the Port

4/ CNO 2115582

5/ Navy Day Speech by Captain H. C. Fischer in Astoria 26 October 1946

of Astoria. The requested personnel, when the base is completed, is eighteen officers and two hundred men.

It is quite natural, with so much activity, for many problems to have arisen. One of the first problems was the rapid rate at which the reserve personnel was being discharged. 6/ It made a great turn-over of men a necessity and at the same time created a feeling of general unrest. To add to this latter feeling, many of the responsibilities were divided between the two stations which are located a distance of six miles apart. However, time is gradually alleviating these problems, and in spite of this chronic manpower shortage, the program is progressing according to schedule. The first LST was moved alongside the newly constructed piers on October 19, 1946, and since that time over twenty-four LST's have assumed their new positions.

6/ Enclosures B. and C.

Enclosure (A)

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Personnel count at the U. S. Naval Station, Astoria, Oregon,
including the ColRivGrp of the NINETEENTH Fleet:

Sept '45	1200
Oct	1300
Nov	1300
Dec	1400
Jan '46	1500
Feb	2000
Mar	2500
Apr	2800
May	3100 - 75 ships
June	2200
July	1800
Aug	1300
Sept	1100

Enclosure (B)

- 1 -

Personnel count at the U. S. Naval Station, Astoria, Oregon,
exclusive of dependent units:

Jan '46	207
Feb	400
Mar	417
Apr	299
May	369
June	317
July	408
Aug	200
Sept	248
Oct	233

Enclosure (C)